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January 14, 2001

U.S. Food and Drug Administration
Dockets Management Branch
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to urge the granting of petition 98P-0151/CP1 prohibiting the slaughter of downed animals. It is my understanding that the USDA has announced a policy to stop purchasing meat from downed cows for Federal programs. This development shows a growing consensus-even among livestock industry and government officials that the marketing and slaughter of downed animals is unacceptable.

Animals who are too sick or injured even to stand should not be allowed to enter the food chain. In addition to posing an increased risk for bacterial contamination, there is evidence that some downed animals may be afflicted with a form of 'Mad Cow Disease'.

It is impossible to move downed animals humanely, and they are typically pushed with tractors or dragged with chains, inhumane processes which cause injuries ranging from bruises and abrasions, to broken bones and torn ligaments. This inhumane treatment is despicable and unacceptable to me as well.

Industry experts have estimated that 90% of downed animals can be prevented with better care and handling. I believe that removing the market for downed animals will provide an incentive to industry to prevent downed animals in the first place.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

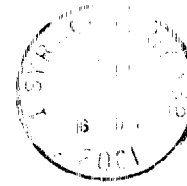
Respectfully,


Susan H. Picard

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